

Sheridan Inn
Broadway between 4th & 5th Streets
Sheridan, Sheridan County
Wyoming

HABS No. WYO-28

HABS
WYO
17-SHER,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Western Office, Division of Design and Construction
450 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California

SHERIDAN INN

Sheridan, Sheridan County, Wyoming

ADDRESS: The block bounded by Broadway, Gould, 4th & 5th
Streets

OWNER: Robert Jurosek

OCCUPANT: none

USE: none

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Sheridan Inn was the first building of any size and importance built in this ranching and coal mining center of northern Wyoming that was growing up along the old Bozeman Trail. From the date of the grand opening on July 1, 1893, until 1965, when it closed, the Inn served as a social center for a large area.

The Sheridan Inn was considered the finest hotel between Chicago and San Francisco at the time of its completion. Among the famous guests there were three presidents: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and Calvin Coolidge. Buffalo Bill was a frequent guest and at one time part owner. He used to audition acts for his Wild West Show from the veranda. The Inn was also immortalized by Robert Ripley, who called it "The House of Sixty-Nine Gables".

In later years fewer and fewer guests used the hotel rooms, but the dining room continued to offer the public the fine food for which the Inn was famous, and the grand saloon continued to serve drinks from the Buffalo Bill Bar until 1965 when the Inn was closed.

In January, 1965, the Inn was designated as a registered National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Since that time the future of the building has been in doubt. The land has been sought for an entirely different enterprise that would tear down the building and cut down the numerous sixty to seventy year old trees for a parking lot. However, there is a strong local movement to raise money to buy the land and restore the Inn. In April, 1967, a gala celebration was held in the famed old building as part of this money-raising program.

WYO-
17-SACR

WYO-28
Page 2

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The railroad reached Sheridan, Wyoming in 1891, linking it with Omaha, Nebraska. To attract tourists and to provide suitable accommodations for other travelers, plans were laid for a first class hotel. This three story frame structure was designed by Walker and Kimball, Architects, of Omaha and Boston. Thomas Kimball reportedly planned the building along the lines of similar structures that he had seen in Scotland. The building was built by the joint efforts of the Burlington & Missouri Railroad and the Sheridan Land Company.

The railroad station was originally located directly across the street east of the hotel, and the hotel operated the lunch counter in the train station. At a later date the station was moved.

George Canfield came to Sheridan from Omaha to open and manage the new Inn in the fall of 1892, and brought his operating staff with him. Colonel William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody was closely associated with the hotel in its early days. A frequent guest of the hotel, the trimming of his famed mustache and goatee in the hotel barber shop always caused a stir. Cody previewed acts for his Wild West Show from the spacious porch of the hotel, and when there he was always the leader of the Grand March into the dining room. Among the hotel's numerous owners was the W. F. Cody Hotel Co., from 1894-96; during this time the hotel was the mecca of showmen.

The Inn had many famous guests besides those already mentioned. Among them were: Generals Pershing, Carrington and Freeman; Frank Crouard, Indian Scout for General Crook; Calamity Jane; Will Rogers; and Ernest Hemingway.

The grand opening of the Sheridan Inn brought people from miles around to partake in the gala celebration, see the first electric lights in town and to marvel at the big building with its fine furniture. A train was chartered and brought hundreds of guests from Omaha to participate in the opening and receive a drink served in the elegant saloon. The bar is still there, as grand as ever, though in a different location in the remodeled saloon and cardroom. It is an oak and mahogany masterpiece built in England and shipped to Sheridan.

The building now stands vacant, awaiting whether demolition or restoration.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL AND SOURCES

Billings Gazette, Billings, Montana, April 9, 1967.
Burlington Bulletin, Burlington Lines (publisher), Chicago, No. 20,
March-April, 1965
Sheridan Press, Sheridan, Wyo., April 5, 1960; Jan. 23, 1965; May 1,
1965; August 26, 1965
Wyoming, W.P.A. Writers Project, Oxford University Press, New York
1941

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Sheridan Inn originally had 64 bedrooms located on the second and third floors within the gambrel roof, each bedroom having its own dormer window. The roof, although steep, gradually melted into the slope of the porch, supposedly providing a quick and safe fire escape.

The dining room, saloon and other first floor rooms have the bottom cord of large trusses of handhewn Georgia pine. The largest span is 40'-2" over the dining room. The remainder of each truss is concealed between the walls of some of the rooms of the second floor (full height). The three fireplaces, one each in the dining room, ladies parlor and the lobby, are of native cobblestone and were built at a cost of \$1,000 each -- a high price in 1893 when a sumptuous dinner could be bought at the hotel for fifty cents.

EXTERIOR

Overall Dimensions - An L-shaped three story frame structure. The longest wing, the east front, measures 144'-8" x 55'-9" including the porch; the north wing is 98'-5" x 47'-1".

Foundation - concrete.

Wall Construction - wood frame, 2 x 6 studs, beveled siding.

Openings - Three sets of double-paneled and lighted doors on the front facade lead into the dining room, the ladies parlor and the hotel lobby. A similar doorway opens into the saloon from the northwest porch. The north facade has two single doors, one leading into the lobby, the other into the barber shop. The west elevation has several doors opening into the kitchen, etc.; likewise the south facade of the east-west wing.

WYO
17.5 HCR
1-

WYO-28
Page 4

Windows - Wood, double-hung, varying from 2/2 to 4/4 lights throughout. The third floor windows are 2/2 wood casement units crowned by a circular transom in the gabled dormer.

Roof - Gambrel roof, shingled; gable ends sided.

Chimneys - stone.

INTERIOR

Floor Plans - Essentially an L-shaped building. The main or front runs north-south and the east-west wing is located on the north end of the structure. A combined employees living quarters and laundry was built behind and separate from the hotel. This was in the same style as the hotel.

First Floor: The north-south wing contained the dining room, ladies parlor, hotel lobby, barber shop, staircase, check room, and storage with kitchen and pantry areas behind (on the west). The east-west wing contained the original (now altered) saloon and cardroom, men's toilet and two small card rooms. Some additions have been tacked onto the kitchen but are not of historical importance.

Second Floor: Contained within the roof area. There are thirty bedrooms, some single and others double, but all having a dormer window (two in the double rooms) staircase, toilets, service room and central corridors.

Third Floor: Contains thirty-four rooms, (smaller than those of the second floor) staircase, service room, and tank room - the hotel had its own water supply.

The building has a partial basement.

Stairway - An open main staircase leads from the first floor to the second and third floors. Another staircase, enclosed, was a service staircase connecting all floors.

Floors - T & G pine.

Wall and Ceiling Finish - plaster.

Fireplaces - Three, of native cobblestone.

WYO

17-SACK

WYO-28
Page 5

Doors - Four-panel, wood.

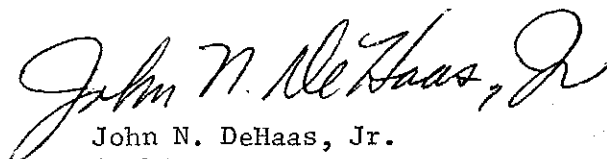
Trim - Pine, elaborately moulded.

Lighting - Electric.

SITE

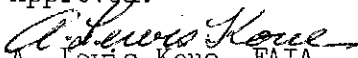
The Inn and servants building occupy the full block. They are set among beautiful tall trees over sixty years old.

Prepared by,


John N. DeHaas, Jr.
Architect

June 1967

Approved:


A. Lewis Koue, FAIA

Supervisory Architect
Div. Historic Architecture
National Park Service